

Denial

Have you heard that American country song, “Cleopatra, Queen of Denial”? It came out about twenty years ago but its painful lyrics still ring true today:

*Well I said he had a lot of potential
He was only misunderstood
You know he didn't really mean to treat me so bad
He wanted to be good
And I swore one day I would tame him
Even though he loved to run hog wild
Just call me Cleopatra everybody, 'cause I'm the Queen of Denial*

You get the point. We've all been there, done that, making excuses for a man who's not worth the incredible amount of trouble getting involved with him with later cause. But we get involved anyway. He shows interest in us and we're hooked. Now if a friend gets involved with a similar scoundrel, we're quick to recognize and point out his faults, but we're even quicker at blinding ourselves to them when it's our own scoundrel.

Denial is sneaky and subtle and so very easy to accept. Why is that? Because the alternative is to face the truth, which may be painful, or face fear, which is scary. But it's better to face the truth and your fears now before too much time and emotions are invested in someone who will do you no good. And we women are experts at living in denial just so we won't have to be alone.

I chatted with my neighbor recently and she opened up about how her and her ex-husband divorced after she found photos and text messages on his phone from one of his female co-workers. When my neighbor moved out, this co-worker moved right in. Incredibly, my neighbor said she didn't know for certain that her ex and this lady had an affair or were living together as a couple. She said, “Maybe she's just renting a room from him.”

I was shocked at the obvious denial she is living in. She also admitted that she never loved this man (and all her friends and family knew it), that she had only married him because she knew he would be a good husband and father. And you know what? She's not the first person I've ever heard confess to such a selfish act. Two other acquaintances told said they only married their husbands because they were getting older and feared no one else would come along.

Denial: it's unfair to all parties involved. The more we live in it, the worse our lives become. So no matter how painful or scary facing the truth is, let's face it. Let's be proactive about living. Let's quit denial, quit passivity. We'll be happier in the long run.